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It was tantamount to a testator putting his finger upon the seal appended to a will, and declaring, in the presence of witnesses, that this is his last will and testament. So the other act, implying not only renunciation, but contempt, viz., that of spitting, is often only performed in pantomime, the person performing only saying to the other "p'thew upon thee," without actually spitting upon him. As above intimated, there was no desire in this case to express contempt. Had there been, Ruth should have been present to act the part. But in Ps. LX., 8, the contemptuous shade of meaning is evident from the connection, and so the Arabs now often say, "My shoe at you."

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Use of Wine by the Jews.—The author of the *Bibliographical Notes* in the preceding number of the OLD TESTAMENT STUDENT, the Rev. J. W. Haley closes his article, p. 122, with a thought which is deserving of being taken to heart. He says, "Every Christian minister should carefully study modern Judaism, as represented by those writers who are thoroughly versed in the subject." It is now unfortunate in him to have directed the attention of the students of Judaism to writers who are *not* versed at all in the subject. The books which he describes in his *Notes* are, probably without any exception, the merest trash. A glance at the *tohu wabohu* of their contents, as the same is indicated in the Notes of the Rev. Mr. Haley, is alone sufficient to show that their writers were of illogical and perfectly confused minds. To one who is more or less familiar with the life and literature of the Jews, it is also clear upon one glance from the headings of the chapters and from the little we see quoted by Mr. Haley, that the authors are not entitled to consideration by scholarly minds seeking after truth. *Such* books must be totally ignored. For instead of giving information and enlightenment upon modern Judaism, they mislead and misinform.

From several of the books described by him, the Rev. J. W. Haley quotes passages according to which Jews are abstainers from wine; at least on the Passover festival. Here is cumulative evidence, some may think, showing this to be so. But it is not so. The truth lies almost in the opposite direction. Very old laws, going back to Ante-Christian times, command it as a religious duty to the pious Jew, to drink four cups of fermented grape wine on Passover eve, even when during the balance of the year he would not drink a drop of wine, be it on account of a natural dislike of wine, be it on account of poverty (in such a case the poor Israelite had to be sufficiently supported from the charity funds of the congregation in order to enable him to buy his wine, see Mishnah P'saḥim, X., 1.), be it for any reason whatsoever. In later ages, the Casuists granted it as an indulgence to use raisin mixtures and other similar beverages in case *Kasher fermented grape wine could not be procured*.

While in fact grape wine *is* used at the Passover festival by the strict and law-abiding Jews, some other drinks, as beer, ale, rye whiskey, are avoided by them during the festive week. And why? Because they are made by a process of fermentation from one or the other of the five kinds of grain (rye, wheat, spelt, barley, oats) out of which fermented bread, or leavened bread, is produced. And on the Hag hammatzoth (the feast of unleavened bread) no leavened or fermented bread, nor any other production from the said kinds of grain, except Matzmoth, should be used by Israelites.

We can add still more. In the apostolic age, those who took a pledge, or a vow, not to taste wine, etc., were considered to be *sinnners*. Among the ancient Israelites were now and then such single individuals to be found, the so-called Nazarites, who had taken a pledge not to drink wine for a certain time, etc. But they were *not* looked upon as exemplars for imitation. Rabbi El'azar Haqqappar, an authority of the second Christian century, remarked that according to the Mosaic law (Num. chap. vi.) the Nazarite or total abstainer must bring a sin-offering. Why is this? What sin has he committed? And he answers, he has caused to himself suffering by his abstinence from wine; he is a sinner (Nazir 19^a; ibid. 22^a; Sifrē ad Num. sec. 30: Bammidhbar rabbah sec. 10, and elsewhere.) In N'dharim 10^a it is recorded that a long time anterior to El'azar Haqqappar the same idea was maintained and expressed by Rabbi Simon (probably the son of the Gamaliel mentioned in Acts chap. iv.) and by Simon the Just (who lived about the year 200 before Christ).

Whether the ancient Rabbis in Midrash-times were correct, or not, in their explanation of the sin-offering which the Nazarite had to bring, is here quite irrelevant. But their sayings show in what light the Jewish cotemporaries of the apostles regarded the total abstainers.

On the difference between a *Shathuy* (one who feels somewhat the effect of wine) and a *Sakhur* (one who is drunk), see interesting definitions, discussions, and conclusions in Talmud Erubhin 64^a.

Let it be mentioned also that every Israelite, whenever he took a cup of wine into his hands, had to say, and did say, before drinking of it, the following benediction: "Praised be Thou, Eternal, our God, King of the world, who hast created the fruit of the vine" (B'rakhoth vi., 1).

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➤EDITORIAL NOTES.◀

The Study of Prophecy.—Three things are probably true in reference to the study of Prophecy:

1) Of the many departments of Bible study, the department of Prophecy is most generally neglected. How many students enter the ministry with clear and defined notions on the subject? How many ministers in the pastorate know, really, anything about it? And yet how extensive is the prophetic element in Scripture. How frequently and how emphatically is this element referred to in both Old and New Testaments. Will any one dare to say that these *prophecies* were not intended for us, that they have served their purpose, and are a thing of the past? Then let us regard the whole Bible as a thing of the past. If Isaiah's words are out of date, so are Paul's.

2) A prevailing idea in reference to Prophecy, so far as any idea prevails, is that its essential element is prediction. This is a mistake. While prediction occupies a large place, and may be regarded as a characterizing element, it is not the essential element of Prophecy. The words of the prophet had always to do, first, with the people and circumstances of his own time. "If the prophet unfolded the future, it was never done for the mere purpose of foretelling; but always